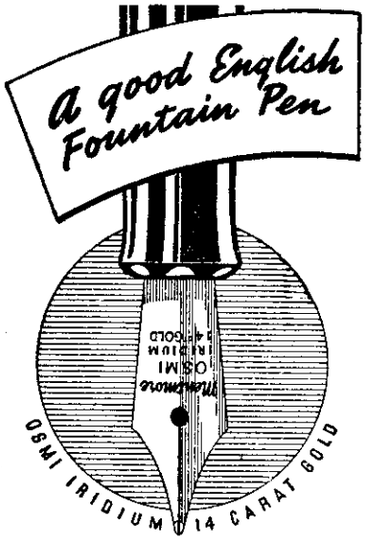

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(continued from previous page)

since the people are docile and co-operative, in the meantime it is perhaps more important to watch Washington than to try to read every sign in Tokyo.

Washington of course lay outside my own field of inquiry, but I spent a good deal of time in the company of American soldiers, both officers and enlisted men, and they told me things like these:

That the women and children took to the hills before the Americans arrived, but had now all returned—conquered by candy and kindness.

That they have very few clothes and a great need of fuel, and just enough food to survive without assistance.

That Japanese girls now walk out freely with American soldiers so far as their parents are concerned, but not always unchecked by General MacArthur.

The official attitude to fraternisation seemed to be that it was undesirable but impossible to stop. So commanding officers seemed reluctant to issue specific orders on the matter. The nearest thing to an order that came my own way was a ruling passed on by a Staff Officer that fraternisation was frowned on but not forbidden. I did not take this to mean that I should ignore courtesies and behave rudely, and I was pleased to notice that American officers returned salutes. When I asked one of them what their rule was I found that it was more or less the same as our own, and he added that he always—to their great astonishment—showed women in trams, trains, and lifts the same consideration as they received in the United States. I noticed, too, in a hotel occupied by American officers that when a film was shown in the evening in the lounge the house-boys who were not on duty were invited to attend, and even given chairs. Next morning, when I was waiting in the vestibule for a jeep, a lad of about 12 sprang up from the seat he occupied by the door, ran across with it and bowed me into it with a firmness and courtesy that had certainly not been acquired in five months.

"THE JAPANESE loves flowers, but he loves food more, and starves unless the earth is kept continually busy feeding him." The illustration shows a Japanese farmer using a wind-machine to blow chaff from rice poured by his wife

* * *

"LET THEM TAKE IT"

I FOUND it difficult to discover what was happening to returned and returning prisoners-of-war. Of those who had gone to the Tokyo area I could discover nothing at all, but some had returned to Kure, and in one case at least had been roughly used by Koreans. We were told at the time that what had occurred was not merely a brawl but a battle, and that strong forces had been turned out to restore order. If that was the case the incident was soon over, since I saw no sign of conflict the next day and could not hear of any casualties. But the Koreans are certainly hostile, and as there are thousands of them still in Japan it will not be pleasant for prisoners who arrive on waterfronts operated by Korean labour.

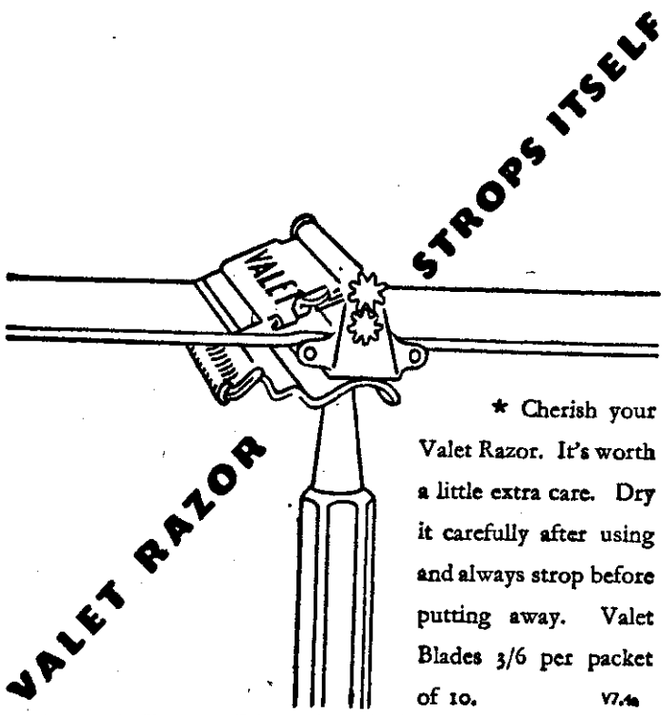
It is fairly clear on the other hand that treatment by the Japanese themselves will be better than it would have been if there had been no surrender and no revolution. As far as I could judge from casual conversations with Californian Japanese working as guides and interpreters, prisoners are still dead in this sense, that no one wants to see them reappear. As long as they were dead officially their relatives received respect and pensions, and both of these disappear when they come back alive. But thousands of men are now returning who were unbeaten in the field, who surrendered only when the Emperor's order reached them, and who were never prisoners while Japanese anywhere else were fighting. What is happening to them? I have no first-hand information, and of course nothing official, but the *Nisei* (Californian Japanese) told me that these are the most disappointed men in Japan. Instead of being welcomed as national heroes, they are ignored and cold-shouldered, partly because the army is blamed for the present calamities, partly because no one wishes to give the Americans the impression that soldiers are important any more. The public policy clearly is good-bye to all that and to hell with those who started it.

Nor could I find any anxiety anywhere about the fate of those charged with war crimes. While I did not gather, when we attended a trial on Morotai, that the prisoners themselves were indifferent to their fate, no one seemed to be interested in them in Japan. Here is my diary note about them made an hour or two after we left the Court:

> Detected neither humiliation nor special hostility in any of the 81 prisoners, nor any aggressiveness in their judges. A flutter of interest and some annoyance when our film operator took a few feet. One or two prisoners embarrassed if looked at, one blinking like a nervous schoolboy. Most looked masters of themselves and of their fate. A captain under examination (since condemned to death) was perhaps a little nervous—not afraid, but ill at ease—but there was no trace of panic in him and none of defiance. He was more like an astute chess-player in difficulties—very unsure of the result of the battle, but determined to fight to the last move. I noticed that he sat bolt upright in his chair with his tunic caught up in a bunch at the back, and that he never changed his position or relaxed the tension of his muscles.

My impression was that they were all determined to live if they could, and anxious to slip back into civilian life without leaving any photographic traces behind them. But when I asked a Japanese policeman about them—the only Japanese I met, except a University professor, whose English was equal to all questions—his answer was, "Let them take it. They are making it harder for us."

(To be concluded)



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